

Message Text

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42

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 ACDA-19

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O R 021134Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MILI

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION: DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE VISIT

REF: FBIS D 01153Z OCT 74

1. RELYING MAINLY ON BACKGROUNDER WITH CHIEF, PRESS DIVISION
MFA, LOCAL NEWSPAPERS REPORTED ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER
CHATICHAI TOLD DEPUTY SECRETARY CLEMENTS QTE THAILAND WANTS TO
STAND WITH HER OWN LEGS AND BREATHE WITH HER OWN NOSE UNQTE.
BANGKOK POST SAID THE DEPUTY SECRETARY ENCOURAGED RTG TO SET UP
JOINT VENTURES WITH U.S. COMPANIES TO PRODUCE ARMS AND SPARE
PARTS.

2. BRIEF UPI ITEM BASED ON SAME SOURCE SAID DEPUTY SECRETARY QTE
DISCUSSED THE LEVEL OF AMERICAN TROOPS IN THAILAND AND
ASSURED CHATICHAI THAT U.S. SUPPORT HERE WILL CONTINUE UNQTE.
INDIAN OCEAN ALSO DISCUSSED, SAID UPI, BUT U.S. OFFICIALS QTE
REFUSED TO ELABORATE UNQTE FOR NEWSMEN.

3. AP DISPATCH SAID QTE CHATICHAI TOLD CLEMENTS THAILAND WOULD
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PREFER AID IN SETTING UP ITS OWN NATIONAL ARMS AND AMMUNITION

FACTORIES RATHER THAN, AS THE UNITED STATES HAS PROPOSED,
BRINGING IN AMERICAN FIRMS UNQTE.

4. TWO THAI- AND SIX CHINESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS ALSO REPORTED
MFA SPOKESMAN'S VERSION OF CLEMENTS-CHATICHAI MEETING, ALL
NOTING CHATICHAI'S PURPORTED COMMENT THAT THAI ARMED FORCES HAVE
BEEN QTE BREATHING FOR THE PAST QUARTER OF A CENTRY THROUGH
AMERICAN LUNGS UNQTE.

5. NO RPT NO EDITORIAL COMMENT THUS FAR.

6. RESPONDING TO REQUESTS OF U.S. REPORTERS FOR QTE MORE
ILLUMINATION UNQTE ABOUT POINTS MADE BY DEPUTY SECRETARY CLEMENTS,
WE GAVE FOLLOWING ON BACKGROUND:

--U.S. REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT SEA SECURITY.

--U.S. WILL CONSULT FULLY WITH RTG ON ANY CHANGE OF FORCE
LEVELS.

-- MANY VARIABLES, SUCH AS SITUATION IN INDOCHINA AREA, MAKE
DECISION ON FORCE LEVEL COMPLICATED.

7. ADDITIONALLY, AP SOUGHT CLARIFICATION OF PURPORTED CHATICHAI
REMARK TO DEPUTY SECRETARY CLEMENTS THAT THAILAND WAS QTE
BORROWING UNQTE WEAPONS FROM U.S., BUT FEARED COUNTRY COULD NOT
QTE STAND ON ITS OWN TWO FEET UNQTE IF U.S. QTE TAKES ITS
WEAPONS BACK UNQTE. OFF THE RECORD WE SAID WE WOULD NOT RPT NOT
ATTEMPT INTERPRET MEANINGS ATTACHED BY MFA SPOKESMAN TO CHATICHAI
COMMENTS. HOWEVER, WE NOTED, U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THAILAND
COULD NOT BE DESCRIBED AS QTE BORROWING UNQTE. AP ASKED IF
DEPUTY SECRETARY CLEMENTS PROPOSED TO CHATICHAI QTE TO BRING
PRIVATE U.S. ARMS PRODUCERS TO THAILAND UNQTE. STILL OFFTHE
RECORD, WE REPLIED THAT QTE APPARENTLY RTG IS EXPLORING A NUMBER
OF WAYS TO DVELOP THAI-BASED CAPABILITY TO PRODUCE SOME
MILITARY ITEMS, AND JOINT VENTURES WERE ONE OF THE POSSIBILITIES
MENTIONED UNQTE.
MASTERS

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